

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN LRMURRAY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:IBRD, EAID, TS

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING PARIS

REF: TUNIS 03596

1. FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION, FOLLOWING IS DRAFT U.S.
STATEMENT TO BE PRESENTED TUNISIA CONSULTATIVE GROUP; QUOTE

THE U.S. APPLAUDS TUNISIA'S RECORD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH
DESCRIBED IN DETAIL BY THE BANK'S REPORT. WE ARE PLEASED
TO HAVE BEEN A PARTICIPANT IN THE PROCESS OVER THE YEARS.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP
WITH TUNISIA. IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, OUR PROGRAM HAS
BEEN ABOUT 8.3 MILLION DOLLARS. OF THAT AMOUNT 2.3 MILLION
DOLLARS WAS ALLOCATED FOR A VARIETY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
ACTIVITIES IN AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING AND
6.0 MILLION DOLLARS IN FOOD ASSISTANCE DISTRIBUTED TO OVER
300,000 PRIMARY SCHOOL AND 20,000 MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH
CENTER RECIPIENTS. WE EXPECT TO REMAIN A PARTICIPANT
IN AND OBSERVER OF TUNISIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS--
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NOT ONLY BECAUSE WE WISH HER WELL, BUT ALSO BECAUSE TUNISIA

HAS EXHIBITED AN ENLIGHTENED AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAS MANY LESSONS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF TUNISIA'S EMPHASIS ON THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT, THE PROGRESS MADE IN LIBERALIZING THE ECONOMY, AND ON ITS EXPORT-ORIENTED STRATEGY.

FUTURE U.S. PROGRAMS IN TUNISIA WILL EMPHASIZE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. IN SOME CASES, WE EXPECT TO COMBINE A LIMITED AMOUNT OF CAPITAL ASSISTANCE WITH THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. WE ALSO EXPECT TO CONCENTRATE OUR PROGRAMS IN THE AREAS OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING. IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT WE ARE DEVELOPING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA A PROJECT IN SILIANA DESIGNED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR PAST PROJECT EXPERIENCE AND TO DEVELOP APPROACHES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WHICH WOULD INSURE THE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF AN INTEGRATED PACKAGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO FARMERS. IN HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING WE ARE SHARING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA EXPERIENCES WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE HAD IN DEVELOPING LOW COST HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING DELIVERY SYSTEMS; SUPPORTING THE FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE NUTRITION INSTITUTE AND PROVIDING CONTRACEPTIVE SUPPLIES. IF THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA IS INTERESTED, WE EXPECT TO EXPLORE THE USE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO COMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO SUPPLY CONTRACEPTIVES.

IN SUM, WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE PLAYED A PART IN TUNISIA'S SUCCESSES TO DATE AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO SUPPORT TUNISIA'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. UNQUOTE.

2. PRINCIPAL POINTS WHICH U.S. DELEGATION WILL MAKE DURING MEETINGS ARE:

1. THE U.S. NOW PLAYS A LIMITED ROLE IN TUNISIA'S DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. GIVEN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, WELL SPELLED OUT IN THE IBRD REPORT, THIS IS A PROPER POSTURE FOR US TO TAKE REGARDING THE ALLOCATIONS OF U.S. CONCESSIONAL ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE NO MAJOR DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE IBRD RECOMMENDATIONS.

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2. THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO: (A) REAFFIRM THAT FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE WE EXPECT TO CONTINUE TO BE AN INTERESTED DONOR, (B) PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS ON THE SECTORS OF GREATEST PROGRAM INTEREST TO US, (C) REFRAIN FROM PLAYING TOO ACTIVE A ROLE IN DISCUSSIONS CONCERNED WITH MACRO-ECONOMIC QUESTIONS WHICH MIGHT IMPLY A CHANGE IN THE NATURE OR AMOUNTS OF OUR ASSISTANCE.

3. THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING STRUCTURAL ISSUES RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR: (A) ACCELERATE THE PACE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRANSFER OF RESEARCH RESULTS, (B) DEVISE ADMINISTRATIVE MECHANISMS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, (C) DECENTRALIZE THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND (D) INITIATE A MEANINGFUL LAND REFORM.
4. THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS IN THE HEALTH AND POPULATION SECTOR: (A) BRING LOW COST HEALTH SERVICES TO MORE PEOPLE, (B) INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FAMILY PLANNING ACCEPTORS BY EXPANDING THE SUPPLY OF CONTRACEPTIVES AND (C) IMPROVE NUTRITION AWARENESS. KISSINGER

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